

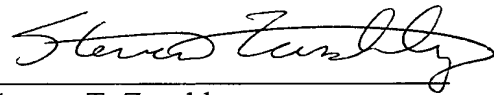
Applicants: Ranko et al.  
Serial No.: Unassigned  
Filing Date: Herewith  
Our Docket: 442-134 PCT/US  
Page 5

**REMARKS**

In this Preliminary Amendment, U.S. format headings have been introduced into the specification and the claims have been amended to eliminate multiple dependencies. No new matter has been added.

In view of the foregoing submission, examination of the present application on the merits is respectfully and earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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**VERSION OF AMENDMENT WITH MARKS**  
**TO SHOW CHANGES MADE**

**IN THE SPECIFICATION:**

On page 1, preceding paragraph [0001],      please insert

- - **FIELD OF THE INVENTION** - -

On page 1, preceding paragraph [0002],      please insert

- - **BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION** - -

On page 2, preceding paragraph [0005],      please insert

- - **OBJECTS AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION** - -

On page 5, preceding paragraph [0019],      please insert

- - **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS** - -

On page 6, preceding paragraph [0024],      please insert

- - **DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS** - -

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

On page 16, line 1,                      ~~CLAIMS~~ - - **What is Claimed is:** - -

Please amend Claims 4, 5, 7-10, 12-17 and 19 as follows:

4. (Amended) The connection means as set forth in claim 1 ~~any one of the claims 1 through 3~~, characterized in that the holding pins (16) are placed within periphery of the associated connection face (9a and 9b) in contact with the coupling unit (7), such holding pins being located preferably near the edge of the respective connection face (9a and 9b).

5. (Amended) The connection means as set forth in claim 1 ~~any one of the claims 1 through 4~~, characterized in that the holding pins (16) are in the form of components separate from the associated base body (3a and 3b), which components are attached to the respective base body (3a and 3b) more particularly in a detachable manner.

7. (Amended) The connection means as set forth in claim 1 ~~any one of the claims 1 through 6~~, characterized in that the holding pins (16) on the base bodies (3a and 3b) to be connected together are coaxially opposite to one another in pairs.

8. (Amended) The connection means as set forth in claim 1 ~~any one of the claims 1 through 7~~, characterized in that for the mutual clamping together of the two coupling bodies (17 and 18) clamping means (25) engaging same are provided which are preferably in the form of clamping means (25) designed in the form of screw connection means.

9. (Amended) The connection means as set forth in claim 8 ~~in conjunction with claim 7~~, characterized in that the holding pins on the base bodies to be connected together are coaxially opposite to one another in pairs and the clamping means (25) are provided with clamping screws (38) one respective clamping screw fitting through an intermediate space (37) present between two holding pins (16) associated with each other in a pair.

10. (Amended) The connection means as set forth in claim 1 ~~any one of the claims 1 through 9~~, characterized in that both the working faces (22 and 23) of the coupling bodies (17 and 18) and also the mating working faces (24) cooperating with the same, of the holding pins (16) are designed in the form of oblique faces.

12. (Amended) The connection means as set forth in claim 1 ~~any one of the claims 1 through 11~~, characterized in that the mating working faces (22 and 23), cooperating with the working faces (22 and 23), of the holding pins (16) have a conical form.

13. (Amended) The connection means as set forth in claim 1 ~~any one of the claims 1 through 11~~, characterized in that the mating working faces (22 and 23), cooperating with the working faces (22 and 23), of the holding pins (16) are provided on a surrounding radial projection (31), which preferably is formed by a head portion (33) of the respective holding pin (16).

14. (Amended) The connection means as set forth in claim 1 ~~any one of the claims 1 through 13~~, characterized in that each holding pin (16) possesses a mating working face (24) facing the connection face (9a and 9b) of the base body (3a and 3b) bearing it and cooperating with the associated working faces (22 and 23) of the coupling bodies (17 and 18), the coupling bodies (17 and 18) fitting, in the clamped together condition thereof, between a respective mating working face (24) and the associated connection face (9a and 9b) and acting on both the mating working face (24) and the connection face (9a and 9b).

15. (Amended) The connection means as set forth in claim 1 ~~any one of the claims 1 through 14~~, characterized in that the coupling bodies (17 and 18) fit round the holding pins (16) like clips in the clamped together state, each coupling body (17 and 18) possessing, for each holding pin (16), a recess partly receiving it.

16. (Amended) The connection means as set forth in claim 1 ~~any one of the claims 1 through 15~~, characterized in that the coupling bodies (17 and 18) engage each other in the direction of the biasing force when in the clamped together state.

17. (Amended) The connection means as set forth in claim 1 ~~any one of the claims 1 through 16~~, characterized in that the coupling unit (7) has a through duct (13) flush with the duct openings (8a and 8b) provided on the connection faces (9a and 9b) in the fitted state, such through duct being completely formed in one of the two coupling bodies.

19. (Amended) The connection means as set forth in claim 17 ~~or in claim 18~~, characterized in that an annular seal (15) is fitted between the coupling body (18) having the opening and the two base bodies (3a and 3b) to be connected, said seal being coaxial in relation to the through duct (13).

Please add the following new Claim 20:

20. (New) The connection means as set forth in claim 18, characterized in that an annular seal (15) is fitted between the coupling body (18) having the opening and the two base bodies (3a and 3b) to be connected, said seal being coaxial in relation to the through duct (13).